The Tired College Man

BY M. E. RAVAGE

Author of "Absorbing the Alien," etc.

I PRESUME that, in the American's point of view at least, it ill becomes me, an immigrant, to set up as a critic of the land that has adopted me. Your native rather fancies the picture of the alien taking flight from the enslaving tyranny of the Old World and seeking asylum under the spacious, protecting wing of the American eagle. It is an engaging picture, at once flattering and true,—which is more than can be said for a good many pictures,—and it makes his generous heart vibrate with a deep sympathy for suffering humanity and with a high pride for the radiating blessings of his own country. As for the ensuing developments, as to what goes on in the alien soul when it comes into collision with the American reality, his vision is somewhat blurred. He looks about him with a kind of parental satisfaction and observes vaguely how the new-comer avails himself of his opportunities and in an astonishingly short time takes hold not only of the means of prosperity, but of the American mode of life as well; so that it is small wonder if he tells himself with an expansive exultation that there is no cause for worry. Now and then, to be sure, as chance leads him to contemplate the seething human hives of the foreign colony, with its imported wares and its un-American garrulity and gesticulations, he might for one disquieting instant reflect on the problem that the immigrant "in his midst" presents. But it is seldom, indeed, if ever, that the realization comes home to him of the huge problem that America is to the immigrant.

It is, therefore, not hard to imagine his amazement, to say nothing of his resentment, when I, who owe to America, if not life, at least liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, "suddenly" drop the mask and throw down the critical gauntlet to my benefactor. Not that he is unused to criticism or intolerant of it. There is no one in the whole world like the American for inquiring of all who come his way what they think of him and his institutions. But it is not from this quarter that he looks for it. Commentaries are a luxury that may be understandably indulged in by the great and the famous of civilized foreign countries; but that the alien, whom he has, as it were, picked off the street and given the privilege of his home, should take on airs and make comparisons, strikes him as in the worst possible taste. It is at the very least a violation of the established rules of hospitality. What is worse, it spoils the traditional picture of America as the alien's paradise of contentment. Wherefore I shall quite readily understand him if, in his righteous irritation, his first impulse is to disregard the point at issue altogether, and inform his self-constituted critic that if America does not suit him, there is no law against his returning whence he came.

And yet, whether you like it or not, it cannot be too emphatically asserted or too often repeated that the alien in America is taking his new home most soberly. This at any rate I can say from immediate knowledge and experience, the alien in the East Side Ghetto is very far from accepting America unquestioningly; and when it is remembered that no foreigner wafted to these shores has a nobler ideal of this land of his aspirations, or greater cause to be grateful for its blessings, it may well be assumed that whatever is true of him in this respect will hold good in at least equal measure of all other im-

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migrants. It ought to require no extraordinary penetration to grasp the reasons for this apparently unwarranted attitude. The new-comer may love America, and I think that he usually does, but his is not, and cannot be, a blind love. He is without exception keenly alive to the debt he owes her, but even that will not prevent him from keeping his eyes open. He is by the very nature of his case, and against his own will, forced to look about him critically. Unlike the native, he possesses a racial memory, an imported point of view, an inherited background, which continually thrusts upon him the odious task of making comparisons. He may find the reality surpassing the ideal, or he may find the ideal an exaggeration of the reality, but one thing is certain, he will never cease measuring the one against the other. He is like a widower who has married again. He is unmistakably fonder of his new spouse, but she is not the first passion of his youth, and the fact that there once was a first has furnished him with a criterion of judgment which it is inevitable that he should use. It may not be flattering to be told this, but let the American who really cares to understand his future fellow-citizens make a careful note of it.

I regard it as a fortunate incident in my career that circumstances prevented me from entering any of the institutions of learning in New York City. No doubt I should have been quite as well trained academically at Columbia or at the city college as I was in the middle West, perhaps better; and no doubt, also, I should quite as certainly have risen, as the phrase goes, from the ranks of the sweat-shop proletariat into the professional classes. But one thing I know I should have missed, and that thing is what I have come to look upon as by far the most vital element in my education—I should not have come to know America as I know her. In the Eastern universities, and particularly in those situated in the large cities, the immigrant element from the "colonies" is very considerable, and the natural tendency for them is to cling closely together, to form, as it were, a branch of the colony within the walls. When their day's work is over they return to their foreign homes and families, so that while America brushes them, so to speak, in passing, they can hardly be said to blend with her older population or to become of it. In the middle West matters went differently with me. I was virtually the only one of my kind, and whether I liked it or not, I must mingle with the world about me and in a measure adopt its ways or perish. I must study America and become an American myself purely for self-preservation.

I had heard many things about the American both in Europe and on the East Side, and few of them to his credit. He was, by all accounts, a kind of modernized barbarian. He had no spiritual interests and no ideals. He was active and intelligent, yes, but whether or not he had a mind, there was certainly no evidence of his having a soul. His civilization was a thing of steel and electricity, of engines and smoke. To the East-Sider especially, with his profound idealism, his omnivorous intellectual appetites, his worship of knowledge for its own sake, his deeply spiritual nature, his social point of view, his high regard for literature and the drama and the arts as vital things in human life, the American seemed, indeed, a crude individualist and a rank materialist. Himself of the lower classes economically, he had expected that the American, who was in his own country and master of its varied opportunities, would develop a culture and a *Weltanschauung* that the world might well look up to. But he has talked with his native friends or customers, he has followed them to their "shows" and their games, he has tried to read their popular books, he has looked over people's shoulders in the street railways and caught a glimpse of what interested them in their newspapers and their periodicals, and it is small wonder that he has come away with a feeling that, whatever might be said for Americans, of the fullness of life and of the things of the spirit they know as little as children.

I had heard all this and much more be-

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sides, and yet I started off to college in great hopes and high expectations. No doubt, I told myself, much of this adverse impression of the American on his cultural side was warranted. But it was, after all, an impression gained from only one American city, a city which the East-Sider, like all foreigners, was too apt to regard as an epitome of the United States, but which in point of fact was as uncharacteristic of the great country as anything could well be. New York was cosmopolitan; it had always had its face turned to the East; it was huge and chaotic and undigested; it was no more typical of America than Nice was of France, or Constantinople of Turkey. I was going to the middle West, to the heart and backbone of the country, where the American tradition and the American culture remained what they had been from the beginning, pure and unalloyed and free from Old-World contacts. What is more, in New York the business type predominated, and he was hardly a proper criterion to measure the spiritual temper of a community by, whether the community happened to be New York or Berlin or Damascus. I was going to college, where the best in the land foregathered — the idealistic youth, the thirsty after knowledge, the standard-bearers of the mind. I remember with what a medley of fear and hope I set about my preparations. I was only too keenly aware of my own crudeness, of my sweat-shop career, of my hasty, made-to-order, night-school education. How, I kept asking myself, would I, a foreigner, a factory hand fresh from the sewing-machine, fit into the lofty *milieu* of a college with its traditional atmosphere of culture and scholarship? To be sure, the Ghetto had had its intellectual ferments, its noble yearnings; but what was that, after all, but an aspiration? The college, ah, that would be the reality.

Perhaps it was this foolish expectancy, this over-zealousness of mine, that led to my disillusionment. Undoubtedly, if my calculations had been saner, if I had made the proper allowances for the humanity of the college man, I should have in the end been more just to him. As it was, it was inevitable that my very prejudice in his favor should ultimately be converted into an exaggerated emphasis on his foibles. However that may be, I was not in college very long before I began to feel that my East Side friends' estimate of American spirituality applied quite as well to the college man as it did to the business man. It was, of course, conceivable that his ideals and mine should not be the same, or even that I should fail to put my hand on the things that were ideals to him. Many a foreigner has returned from his travels over alien lands to inform his astonished countrymen that the inhabitants of this country or that had nothing that could possibly be termed a religion or a philosophical outlook upon life, only to discover on further investigation that he had brought his own special standards to bear on a set of phenomena that were a law unto themselves. But it was impossible for me to go astray on the dreams and aspirations of my fellow-students, because they continually talked of them and held them up high for the contemplation and the admiration of all comers.

No, there was nothing of the mysterious about the philosophy of the American youth; and yet I was hard put to it to get at the heart of it. It was during my first month at the university that I made an attempt to break the ice with my tablemates at the dining-club by introducing the subject of Ibsen's plays. What did they think, I asked them, about the great Norwegian's earlier prose dramas as compared with his more recent deviations into symbolism and mysticism? Did n't they prefer such a well-knit, electrical tragedy as, say, "Hedda Gabbler," to the rambling, groping kind of thing of which "When We Dead Awaken" was the type? I was altogether modest in my inquiry. I gave no hint of any pretension to understanding Ibsen. But in my little radical world on the East Side it had been the custom to let no great literary movement pass undiscussed. That was the way, we thought, one came to understand literature—by argument. It puzzled me, there-

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fore, to observe that my fellow-students received my advances coldly and diffidently and took the first opportunity to change the subject. Had I stepped on their literary toes, I wondered?

On the next occasion I tackled Socialism and fared even worse. On this topic, I found, my friends did have an opinion which they were ready to express. One fellow immediately volunteered the information that Socialism was wicked and immoral because it proposed to rob the man with initiative and ability for the benefit of the incompetent and idle. Another declared that he could see no justice in a system which was in favor of dividing up everything. A third cried with a good deal of passion that the whole thing was only an excuse for riffraff and malcontents to make trouble, and ended up by asking me whether I would not rather see a rich man coming down the street than a poor one. And all agreed that if the Government were to confiscate the property of the wealthy and the ambitious, the laboring man and the have-nots generally would be the first to suffer from the change.

Thenceforth I carefully avoided returning to radical authors and radical economics. It was not my object to obtrude my point of view on anybody. I was merely longing for an argument, a battle of wits such as I had been used to. Literature did not end with Ibsen, and the possibilities of discussion were greater than socialism; and my friends' constant protestations that they were wide-awake, progressive, modern young men, interested in life and the world's doings, rather spurred me on to provoke them to argument. There were sex and religion. Most of us were studying evolution or had studied it. I wanted to know whether my table mates did not agree with me that the revelations of contemporary science were bound to dislocate some of our traditional ideas of faith and the family relation. Moreover, the world was in a turmoil. Whatever one thought of unionism and socialism as doctrinal matters, the class struggle with its periodic eruptions into blood and flame, the ever-growing demands of labor, the feminist unrest, were practical questions that insisted on being answered. It was not so much how one thought about them; but surely no one who pretended to have even the merest passing concern in the affairs of the actual world could stand by and have no thought on the subject at all. It was all very well to say: "We are Americans. What do we care about Bosnia or Morocco?" The things that were happening in these insignificant places were bidding fair to upset the always rickety peace of Europe, and the peace of Europe, as I hope we all know by this time, meant nothing less than the peace of the world. China was on the verge of revolution, and America, in the midst of prosperity, was undergoing a financial crisis that made statesmen and publicists scratch their heads in despair. What was the college man thinking about all these things?

I tried repeatedly to approach various students and to get their point of view. The main building was a veritable beehive of debating and literary societies the eloquent vociferations of which might be heard of a Saturday night clear across the campus into the dormitories. I had often been invited by my room-mate to attend his own organization, and had been promised that I would hear some clever speaking. Well, one night I went, and I confess that I could find no fault with either the logic or the oratory. But with all my pretensions of being interested in affairs, I had to admit that the question whether the board of trustees of our university should or should not immediately establish the honor system in examinations was one to which I had not given much thought. I told my room-mate so, and I think it irritated him, because the next time I tried to approach him with one of *my* pet subjects he lost his temper and told me more than I had bargained for.

"What in the name of sense do you take me for, anyhow?" he shouted. "I am no reformer or high-brow. I don't give a continental for your Ibsen and

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your socialism and all the other stuff that you call world problems. You have an idea that simply because a fellow is in college he must worry his head about every fool thing that comes out in books and in newspapers. But I have n't the time. I have some reason for getting an education and toiling like a slave between classes and in vacations for it [my roommate was earning his way through college]. Do you suppose that literary discussions are going to get me a job or help me to succeed when I get out into the world?"

All this was exceedingly enlightening to me and, I say it without irony, very admirable. It was admirable in its honesty, for one thing. To be sure, very few men in an East Side sweat-shop would have openly said such a thing, but it would not have been because they did not in their hearts feel that way, but because they would not have dared. Besides, it helped me to understand so many things that had hitherto baffled me. Another time a fellow with whom I associated a great deal expressed this attitude even more strikingly. I had begun to notice early that although most of the boys rooted at the game with a will, and jumped to their feet whenever the band struck up the college anthem, and talked proudly of the "varsity," and hated with a personal venom the neighboring institution which beat us regularly every Thanksgiving at foot-ball, a considerable number of them, and my associate among them, were not completely happy at college. One day I asked him what was fretting him. He seemed to be glad to open his heart to some one.

"Look here," he said, "can't you see that this precious business is an awful waste of time? It is mostly chaff with about a grain of wheat to the bushel. If I were here to study a profession it might be all right. But my real work is out in the world. I don't intend to become a prof. I want this to give me a start in life, and I can tell you right off that I have been here long enough to see that it is not going to do it. Here is a silly course in lit that I give about one-third of my time to—outside reading and weekly themes and a semester paper. If it would at least help a fellow's English! But it does n't a bit. People don't talk like Shakespere nowadays, not in offices, anyway. To hear the old prof go into raptures over the stuff you would think there was nothing else in life. I don't say that it does not have its place, but how is it going to do me any good? And it is the same mighty near all the way through. Here is a schedule with three hours' lit, three hours' French, and three hours' math—more than half pure waste. The other six I picked myself. They tried to palm off the usual thing on me, classical archæology and psychology, but I held out for chemistry and economics. Now you might think that there would be some earthly sense to these at least, but they are nearly as bad as the rest of them. Maybe you can tell me what good I am going to get out of all this theorizing about the ether and the ultimate nature of matter, or, as far as that goes, all the eternal discussion about just what determines value? I can't."

If my friends on the East Side had heard this passionate oration they would most likely have cried, "I told you so; the American is a crass materialist, and that is all there is to it." What they would have thought if they had come to grasp my collegian's definition of "life" and the place he accorded to literature and related matters I can only imagine. But I had heard and seen too much of the American philosophy to fly so readily to conclusions. I had learned, among other things, that his practice was, as a rule, better than his theory. If I were to take his protestation of mechanical single-mindedness literally, what was I to make of that very human epigram that he so liked to repeat about never letting his studies interfere with his education? That clearly showed that he was not quite so practical and purposive as he liked to be painted. I knew, furthermore, that his proud insistence that he was too masculine and too level-headed to be interested in

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the things of the mind and the spirit was nothing but a pose. Every day between lunch and the two o'clock class he would sneak off into the periodical room of the library and forget his troubles in a certain page of the St. Louis and Chicago papers. He devoured quantities of stories in the all-fiction magazines, and subscribed to the five-cent weekly from the East and the comic journals from New York. If he did not care for literature, how was I to account for his peals of thunderous laughter, and in examination week at that, over Bill Nye, and for his consistent patronage of the opera-house, where, despite the disapproval of his church, he not only listened breathlessly to the singing chambermaids and the comedians' diverting quips, but gathered enough of the action to come home and unselfishly share his delight with his friends and his roommates afterward.

No more was one to take literally his pretended indifference to the fine arts and the lives of great men, even literary men. He was, on the whole, certainly more musical than I was, although he did not like to advertise the weakness too much. The chambers in the dormitories, thanks to his esthetic enterprise, were so completely plastered up with athletic posters and mottos and magazine covers that I was compelled to hang my maps out in the hall. As for great men, he was as servile a hero worshiper as I had ever known. His admiration for the President of the United States was downright idolatry. He continually read biographies of him and of Mr. Edison and of some great railroad promoter in the West whose name I have forgotten. He might sneer all he cared about my devotion to Ibsen and Tolstoy and Whitman. The game was up. I had caught him at the same thing. He had his literary divinities just as much as I did. Eugene Field was his Ibsen, although further inquiry revealed the fact that what he admired about the man was, first, that he had been expelled from our own university and, second, that he had made a phenomenal success. In my fellow-student's estimation the two incidents were related as cause and effect. This and that other more pointed tradition of the millionaire who once gave a building to his college in gratitude for its having driven him into the world were greatly relished by the student body because they proved that a college education was not only not necessary in the race to success, but a direct hindrance.

No, the East Side charge against the American that he was a materialist was slander, or at best a half-truth. What was true was that he worshiped success and those who had attained success, but that is quite a different matter. It was, for example, not the money that success usually brought with it that fired his spirit, or if it was, it was altogether a secondary consideration. It was success in the abstract that was the virtue, and abstractions are of the stuff of idealism. It was just the soul-satisfying consciousness that one had started out to get something big —oh, it must be something big—and has got it, has brought the trophy back with him. To be recognized, to strike out into some untrodden field perhaps, to grapple with the odds of life, and to end up by feeling that one has won out—that was what spurred my friends into disagreeable tasks, even into college, and if that is sordid materialism I should like to know what is spirituality. Failure was the deadly thing, not because it was unremunerative—not chiefly,—but because it made for dejection and self-distrust and a consciousness of insignificance, and tended to radiate an atmosphere of paralysis and pessimism.

That was why my fellow-students took so little stock in the professor. I remember how deeply shocked I was at their irreverence toward him when I first arrived at college. "The Oven," our satirical monthly, never missed a chance to "roast" the faculty; the law students' annual mock trial was an elaborate take-off on them; every "stunt," big or little, was in large part devoted to a recital of their foibles. Ostensibly all this was no more than good-humored waggery, aimed at individual persons, and an exercise of the

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right of free speech on the part of free men. It required, however, only a scratching of the surface to show me that it had its roots in the American's philosophy. The professor, from this point of view, was not laughable, but contemptible, and not as a person but as a class. He was a failure, if ever there was one. As one of my friends put it: "If these fellows, who set up as our betters, had been ambitious, if they had been made of the proper stuff, they would have gone in for the big things, for a kind of work that matters in the world, instead of piddling away their lives over little text books and specimens and kids' themes. If they had had red blood in their veins, their own impulses would have thrust them into the arena of real life to battle with other red-blooded men instead of retiring into the sheltered cloister to be content with second-hand experience."

And the worst of it was that, theoretically at least, there was altogether too much justice in the American's attitude toward the man who gives himself up to purely intellectual pursuits. For it is to be observed that the clergyman and the man of letters shared the same stigma with the professor. In a country where the active life and its visible "results" were so highly prized, it was clearly the man who was unfitted for everything else that chose the underpaid and the undervalued professions. All human beings are sensitive to the praise and the esteem of their fellows; therefore a man who deliberately elected to forfeit not only the prizes of material success, but the regard of society and the worship of the sex that has happiness and love in its grasp, must be either a fool or a failure or both. That a man might be prompted to such a course by idealism or by a special kind of taste or even by a fine spirit of courage and renunciation; that the business of teaching young men and women in a university demanded talents of quite as high and admirable an order as those of the commercial promoter or the industrial captain—these considerations, requiring as they did somewhat extraordinary penetration, one could not, of course, expect to enter the head of a mere college student.

I say that theoretically it was quite true that the university professor in America must be an incompetent and a backward-looking person without any sort of interest in the realities of life. In practice, however, it fell out just the reverse. My fellow-student, fresh from the high-school and the farm, saturated from his infancy with the pioneer's reverence for the big man and the big thing, might fancy that because business was as broad as life, therefore the business man's horizon was broad and his vistas long. But I had been in business before I went to college, and I knew that this ideal of the man of the world as a bustling, practical, wide-awake, keen-sighted person, knowing life and understanding men and keeping his hand on the pulse of affairs, was sheer romantic moonshine. I had seen the giant creature in any number of specimens, and my impression of him was not the least bit so formidable. It was not, as I could judge, the college professor, cooped up in his four walls, concerned with dead languages and stuffed fowls, who was the academic dreamer. He could not be if he wanted to. He had too much on his hands. Technically, it is true, he belonged to a specialized department, and his world consisted in his little "subject," but as a matter of actual fact, the whole university, or, I should say, the whole universe, was his specialty. He must study history as a background for literature, and he could not understand history without going into political science, and politics was but a subdivision of sociology, and sociology rested on biology. If he did not want to be a crabbed student of mere books and tried to cultivate his interest in the human and artistic side of literature, he must have at least a smattering of esthetics and a good deal more than a smattering of the plastic arts, and these led him into the history of art and archæology. He must read the newspapers and the current publications in order to keep fresh and equip himself with telling illustrations from daily life for his lectures. And

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as for human contacts, let him who thinks that it is an academic undertaking to teach a roomful of cantankerous students, every one of whom has his own particular idea of what he wants to learn and his own special opinion of the "prof," try his hand at it.

No, it was not the professor, but the "man of affairs," whom I had found to be narrow both in experience and in outlook, in his habits and in his interests. What he was pleased to call real life was an affair of eight feet by six, secured against the clamors of a seething universe without by a "Private—No Admittance" sign on the door, and linked with it only by a telephone, which under the guardianship of a faithful and watchful operator, transmitted only what he wanted to hear. Of his own particular line, which was usually no broader than the imaginary line of Euclid, he knew perhaps quite as much as the professor, and he gave himself up to it with a pathetic devotion which arose from his illusion that the world depended on it. He took himself as seriously as a schoolboy, with his files and his appliances and his high talk. As for his universal attachments and concerns, ah, well, I have since seen him at his clubs and his frolics, and there is no denying he is human. When he is too tired to talk business he loves to forget himself in his games and in his fishing, things utterly removed from what his student-worshiper regards as life. To watch the fury with which he plunges into his play you would hardly accept him in the part he likes to take of a weary monster in search of recuperative change. And I harbor a suspicion that even in business hours he reads the sporting page with a greater and a more genuine avidity than he bestows on the stock-market reports.

Now it was this Peter Pan whom the college man worshiped as a god and held up as an example to be followed, while at the same time he sneered at the professor for his remoteness from reality and his incapacity to succeed. I would have been inclined to quarrel with him for this idolatry of his if I had not early recognized that it was something very much deeper than that. We all have our aspirations, our spiritual outreachings, our super-selves, and it goes without saying that they are not the same for any two of us. Well, the big man and the big thing were not my educational ideals, but there could be no mistaking the fact that they were his. They controlled his thoughts, his ambitions, and the habits of his life. They colored all his conceptions, his hopes, and his fears. I had not understood at first why my fellow-students regarded a philosophical, searching attitude toward fundamental matters like religion, history, sex, and economics as morbid; or why even the most refined among them had a positive dread lest they should be classified as effeminate; but with this ideal before me all these things became as clear as day. It was not intellectual timidity, as I had imagined. It was simply a determination to keep sane and wholesome and normal against the great battle for success.

I began, moreover, to see into the apparent contradiction in his attitude toward culture and the finer things of existence. To take the arts and the humanities seriously was a confession that one was a high-brow, and to be a high-brow was to be a weakling and a failure and a "sissy." The cultivation of music and painting and the social refinements was well enough for the effeminate races of Europe. A robust healthy man who was intent on making something of himself might find pleasure in reading an entertaining story and even derive some benefit from it by relaxing his mind; but that was another matter from attaching any serious importance to literature. Books were valuable and broadly useful, but literature was an affectation of the idle, the sentimental, and the weak. What was true of books was also true of the other arts, of science, and even of women. A hymn or a rousing college song was a fine stimulating thing; playing the piano or the mandolin was a pleasing accomplishment and highly restful to overworked nerves; pictures on the wall contributed very materially to the comfort

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and the coziness of a room; calling on a girl of a Sunday evening or marching side by side with her to a game, gave a man a sense of completeness and brought out a great deal that was good and noble in him. But what man of earnest purpose could afford to let these things encroach upon his time or his vital thoughts? They were not life. They were but the frivolities and the relaxations of life. They had their place in the scheme of things, no doubt, but obviously it must be a subordinate place. Real life was the pursuit of tangible results.

In my quality of a dispassionate observer I could not but be impressed with the excellent side of this unique creed, but on the other hand neither could I help seeing the mischief it was causing. The insistence on results was itself producing some strange and lamentable results. It was, in the first place, undermining the American's great confidence in the essential good faith of mankind. It had become impossible for a man to undertake anything disinterestedly. That feeling in the air that it was the personal benefit, the individual advancement, that counted, made people ask at every point: "I wonder what it is going to bring him." If a fellow made a spectacular touchdown and gained popularity in consequence and was perhaps elected to a fraternity, the order of cause and effect was turned around, and it was surmised that he had made a touchdown *in order* to win the honors. If a student took a deep interest in church work and was made a member of the Y. M. C. A. cabinet, or if he toiled hard at his studies and won admittance to the Phi Beta Kappa, it was generally taken for granted that the reward had furnished the inspiration. In later life I found this blight to prevail all over the air of America, far beyond the walls of a university. The President could not urge upon the Congress a first-rate piece of social legislation without having it insinuated against him that he was playing politics and currying favor with the labor vote. Mr. Roosevelt could not offer himself for heroic sacrifice for his country without incurring the accusation that he liked to play the hero for ulterior motives.

Of course you could not long go around with such an attitude and not open the doors to the unworthy and the insincere. Let it be known that it is the result and not the spirit of good work that is of consequence, and before very long you *will* have people going in for the big things who care nothing at all for the service and a great deal for the proceeds and the glory. If I ask myself why it is that so much of our politics is corrupt, and why so much of our literature is half-hearted, and why so much of our public work is slipshod, I think of the things I learned in college and am answered. In college, too, the student leaders were altogether too often the fellows with the push as opposed to the quality, and the medalists were not always the scholars, and many a masculine chap there conquered his dread of effeminacy, and went in for literary work without either the taste or the ability for it. The worst of it is that in such an atmosphere the earnest man and woman is discouraged and repelled, and in the end the nation is the loser.

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